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HELL.

Lecture on Hos. xiii, 14. *O Hell, I will be thy destruction!*

Christian auditors you may ask me, wherefore have you changed the common reading of the text and used the term *Hell*, instead of the grave? I reply, every person acquainted with the original languages, in which it hath pleased God to communicate to man the sacred intelligence of life and immortality, will readily admit, that the Hebrew word, translated *grave*, in the common version of the Text, is that very same term, which is translated *Hell* wherever the word occurs in the old Testament. I am therefore justified in reading my Text as I have done in your hearing; and the good sense of the passage as well as the fulfilment of the prophecy require this change in the mode of reading. But seeing the word *Hell* occurs in the sacred scriptures as the translation of three different words, *Sheol*, *Gehenna*, and *Hades*, I shall endeavor,

1st. To give an explanatory history of these terms,

2d. To disprove the doctrine generally deduced from them.

My hearers will be surprised by the declaration, that not one of the original words, which our translators have rendered *Hell*, conveys the idea of a place or state of punishment in another mode of existence; and consequently their just indignation will be excited against that deceptive system of duplicity, which has so long abused mankind by the misuse of terms and perversion of reason and religion. The word *Hell* in its modern acceptation, excites in the mind a very different idea from that which the term formerly expressed. To our notions of it the words of the Latin poet apply.

"Tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur ab illis."

The word has lost its primitive signification, which, like the original words of which it is the translation in our bibles, was perfectly innocent, and has acquired the modern and hideous idea of a place appropriated to the execution of interminable punishment. The word *Hell*, therefore, by the consent of the ablest commentators of all denominations, should be expunged from our bibles; and no longer used as the translation of the Greek or Hebrew terms; for *there is, confessedly, no word in the original scriptures to express the modern idea of Hell!* The word, says Dr. A. Clarke, is deri-

ved from the Anglo-Saxon *Helan*, which signifies to *cover*, *conceal*, or *hide*; and hence the tilings or covering of a house, and the covers of books are to this day called *Heling*, and the phrase *to hell* is still used as synonymous with *to cover or hide*, in several of the western counties of England, especially, Cornwall and Lancaster. Thus the true and primitive meaning of the word *hell*, was perfectly accordant with the idea suggested by the Hebrew *sheol*, and the Greek *Hades*; for as nouns, all the three words imply something unseen, concealed, or invisible; and have therefore been employed with propriety to convey the notion of an *unseen world*, *the grave*, or *state of the dead in general*. Similar are the sentiments of the learned Archbishop Usher, expressed in his *Treatise de Lim. Patr.*—"We have no word in the French or English language to express the idea conveyed by the Hebrew *sheol*, the Greek *hades*, or the Latin *infern*. Our English word *hell* had anciently this meaning; being derived from the German *hill*, *to hide*. Hence the ancient Irish used to say '*hill the head*,' meaning *to cover the head*. So that our *hell* then answered to the Greek *hades*, which signifies an unseen place." Drs. S. and A. Clarke, Campbell, Whitby, and others, approbate the above definition of *hell*, and harmoniously unite in opinion, that *hell* originally answered to the Greek and Hebrew terms, but ought not to be used in the modern sense, as the translation of *sheol* or *hades*.

How strange then, that from the term *hell*, should have arisen those dreadful notions, which are so assiduously propagated in the world, and which men of fruitful imaginations have so effectually made to operate as the means of delusion and aggrandizement. It is not however surprising, that superstition should act most powerfully on the fears of her votaries, since the human fancy can paint with greater energy the misery than the bliss of a future state.—With the two simple ideas of darkness and fire, we can create a sensation of pain, which may be aggravated to an infinite degree, by adding the idea of endless duration. Hence from the greater facility of depicting the horrors which distract the mind or ruin the peace of society, *hell*, which contained just as much happiness as misery, in its idea, came to be used by religious impostors of every description, as a fit engine to awe the mind of the credulous into that pliability, necessary to favor the views of the avaricious priest or tyrannical monarch. Egypt, the mother of gods, superstition, and mystery, gave origin to the whole doctrine of *Hell*: it we lop off the exuberances of infuriated orthodoxy, during the dark ages of papal delusion. These happy plains, says Diodorus, extending from the Nile to the Pyramids, where once stood the famous Memphis, reported to be the abode of the just after death, are no other than that beautiful country in the vicinity of the lake Acherusia, near Memphis. It is not without foundation, that the

dead have been said to reside here ; for here terminate the funeral ceremonies of most of the Egyptians. Their bodies, having been conveyed across the Nile and the lake Acherusia, are finally deposited in tombs constructed under the surface of these plains. The ceremonies yet practised in Egypt correspond with all the notions of the Greeks, concerning the infernal regions.

SHEOL.

This word, which is translated Hell in the scriptures of the old Testament, signifies only the state of the dead indiscriminately.—Thus Ps. 89. 47, according to the translation of the common prayer reads, what man is he that liveth, and shall not see death ; and shall he deliver his soul from the hand of hell ? What Solomon says, (Prov. 27, 20,) hell and destruction are never full, is perfectly explained by chap. 30. 15, there be three things which are never satisfied—Sheol or Hell, etc.

The Hebrew word, *sheol* is derived from *shaal*, to ask, pray, or hide. Kennicot, who compared the bible with above 1000 Mss. and thus became a practical Hebrician, affirms that the radical meaning of *shaal*, is to ask or pray. In this sense our translators understood it, Gen. 32, 29. Deut. 4, 32, and 32, 7. Josh. 4, 6. Jud. 18, 5, etc. The septuagint renders it *aïtesan*, in Ex. 3, 22, and every impartial inquirer will be satisfied by consulting Pool's Annotations on the passage, Whitby on Acts, 2, 27, Kennicot's first dissertation p. 390, and Shuckford's Connections, vol. 2, p. 340.

The learned Buxtorf defines *sheol*, the "general place of the dead ;" and another very competent judge and excellent Commentator, Dr. Whitby, says according to the scriptures, the Jewish writers, the ancient Fathers and the still more ancient heathen, the Hebrew *Sheol*, and the Greek *Hades*, which answers to it in the translation of the Seventy, signifies the place and receptacle of all the dead. In this sense alone can we understand the sacred writers.—In the first place where the word *sheol* as a noun occurs, Gen. 37, 35, we find the pious Patriarch, saying, "*I will go down into Sheol, to my son mourning.*" How absurd to suppose that Jacob believed his beloved son to be in a place of torment ! And how desperately wicked the language both of the holy Jacob and the patient Job, if we attach to the word-Hell the modern meaning. The former exclaims, "*I shall go to Hell,*" and the latter prays, "*Oh that thou wouldst hide me in Hell till thy wrath be past !*" Job. 14, 13. In the views of our modern Evangelical preachers, Hell is the very focus of the Divine wrath, yet Job prays to be hid in it, in order to escape that wrath ! O how confounded is the language of Babel ! Our modern Babel-builders have long pretended to speak a holy, an-

cient, and Biblical language, but God Almighty, in respect for the truth, has manifested their character by the confusion of tongues.

It is proper here to notify my readers that in the old Testament the word Sheol, does not mean the place of separate spirits; for the writers of the Jewish scriptures had no knowledge of a future mode of existence. They neither feared nor hoped for any thing beyond the grave! Sheol therefore only implies the state of the dead or that chaos of nonentity that was supposed to follow dissolution.—Neither friend nor foe, learned nor unlearned can put his finger on a single passage in the old Testament and say, here is information, that man shall live again. Had the sacred writers ever thought that Sheol meant the abode of spirits, or had they believed in a separate state, they would not have declared, “*there is no device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in Sheol.*” Eccl. 9, 10. *In death there is no remembrance of God, and none shall give him thanks in Sheol,* Ps. 6, 6. *Sheol cannot praise God.* Is. 38, 18. *And that the dead know not any thing.* Eccl. 9, 5. *A man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all go into one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.* Eccl. 3, 19, 20. *As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood drieth up, so man lieth down and riseth not!* Job. 14, 12.

We have shown that sheol, as a verb, signifies to ask or inquire; as a noun it conveys the idea of asking, or inquiry, and denotes that solicitous desire of man to know his fate or destiny after death. Hence we see that it differs radically from the *hades* of the Greeks, or the *Hell* of the moderns. Sheol, or Saul was also a common appellative name in Israel. Their first king was so called, as also the great apostle of the Gentiles; but surely none would have been so wild as to have called their dear children by the name of sheol or hell, had they conceived it to mean the accursed region of the damned! We therefore fairly and rationally conclude, from a full investigation of the passages, that the sheol or hell of the old Testament denoted inquiry, a request, or figuratively, the invisible world, great solicitude, anxiety or trouble: and any person accustomed to etymological investigation, will readily perceive how easily and naturally the figurative sense arises from the literal. In the figurative sense we understand it, Ps. 9, 17; 30, 3; 86, 18; 116, 3; and similar passages. In some of the old English versions, the seventeenth verse of the ninth Psalm is thus rendered, “*the wicked go into hell,*”—i. e. into anxiety and trouble. This translation is perfectly harmonious with the revelation of God, and the experience of man. There is no peace saith my God to the wicked; they are like the troubled sea; Is. 57, 20, 21; into this hell Jonah went, when he endeavored to flee from the Lord. The pains of this hell took hold of David when he went into it, by the commission of those crimes, which tarnish his character, and blacken his memorial to all generations. O sinner thou canst only keep

out of this hell, by doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with thy God.

But my audience may demand what is implied in the text, *O sheol I will be thy destruction*. I answer, *the Lord God will swallow up death in victory; and wipe away tears from all faces*. Is. 25. 8. *God will dwell with men, and they shall be his people, and he shall be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain*. Rev. xxi, 3, 4. The Hell of the bible is that anxiety and trouble which are the effects of sin; and follow as consequence that vanity to which the creature is subject. Rom. viii, 20. But the creature shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God, at the restitution, regeneration, or new creation of all things. The transgression shall be finished, sin terminate, death and hell be cast into the lake of fire to be destroyed, and evil be abolished from the empire of God!

HADES.

Hades from *a*, not, and *eido*, to see—signifies unseen, invisible; the invisible receptacle or mansion of the dead, where all departed spirits are supposed to reside, without any distinction whatever.—In the scriptures, it is often personified as a king of terrors, or destroying monster, having his basileion, or kingdom.—Wis. i, 14. This is implied in the phrase, *heos hadou*, or *doma hadou*. Genesis xxxvii, 35. Num. xvi, 30. Is. xiv, 11. Math. xi, 23. His *pulai*, or gates. Is. xxxviii, 10. Math. xvi, 18. His *puloroi*, or doorkeepers. Job xxxviii, 17. His *cheir*, or hand, Ps. xlix, 15. And his *kentron*, or sting. And notwithstanding that many have formed an unholy alliance, or covenant with him, to support his iniquitous administration, Is. xxviii, 15. yet he will be cast *eis ten limnen tou purros*. into the lake of fire. Here, my auditors, is the fortunate event my text contemplates when death and hell will be destroyed, and golden years return again.

Hades was generally considered by the ancients as a deep cavern or dark region, located in the centre of the earth, by those who admitted the spherical form of the globe, but according to the vulgar notions of astronomy among the ancients, it was thought by the majority to be as far beneath the earth as the heaven was above it.—Hence Zophar, speaking to Job of the incomprehensibility of the Deity, says, it is high as heaven, deeper than hell. Homer, Hesiod, and Virgil, describe Hades as being as far beneath the earth as heaven is above it.

Tosson enerth' haideo hoson ouranos est apo gaies.—Il. 8, 16.

Tosson enerth' hupo ges, hoson ouranos est apo gaies.—Theog. 720.

— tum Tartarus ipse
Bis palet in preceptis tantum, tenditque sub umbras
Quantus ad æthereum cæli suspectus Olympum.—Æn. 6, 577.

Josephus, who borrowed his views from the Grecian traditions, which had been lately adopted by the Pharisees, tells us "*hades* is a subterraneous region, where the light never shines, and which must therefore be perpetual darkness. This region is appointed as a place of custody, in which the souls both of the righteous and unrighteous are detained. Into this region there is only one descent, at whose gate there stands an archangel with a host. The souls which pass through the gate go not all one way. The just are guided to the right, and conducted to a luminous region which we call Abraham's bosom. The unjust are dragged to the left hand by the angels allotted for punishment, who reproach and threaten them by their terrible looks. This is evidently the view of *hades* exhibited in the parable, Luke 16.

From the time of the Pythagorean and Platonic Philosophy, the hell of the ancient heathen was divided into two mansions; that on the right they called *Elysium*, from *a*, not, and *luo*, to dissolve, which they intended to signify *eternal existence*, and is derived from the same word which the apostle employs, Heb. vii, 16, to express endless duration. The *Elysium* of the Greeks, called by the Jews the bosom of Abraham, was believed to be a pleasant and delightful place abounding in all manner of delicacies; but its pleasures they supposed to be corporeal and sensual. The left hand department was appointed for the wicked. This mansion they denominated *Tartarus*, either from the verb *tartarizo*, to tremble, or *tarasso*, to disturb. This was the lowest and most dreadful place in hell, in the opinions of the Greeks and Romans, and is that to which the psalmist alludes, Ps. lxxxvi, 13. It is also mentioned from an apocryphal work, 2 Peter, ii, 4. The entrance or descent into this subterraneous region, the Latins supposed to be through the lake *Avernus* in Campania, near the bay of *Puteolus*, now called *Lago d'Averno*. The exhalation from this lake was believed to be destructive to all birds; hence called *Avernus* from *a*, negatively, and *ornis*, a bird. This name, however, says *Lucretius*, was afterwards applied to all places or lakes possessing similar qualities.*

Strabo describes the country around this lake as abounding with fountains of warm waters, mixed with salt, sulphur, alum, and bitumen, which gave origin to the names of *Phlegethon* and *Pyriphlegethon*, two rivers of hell—so called from these warm sulphurous waters. Of this passage to the infernal regions *Virgil* says,† *the descent at Avernus is easy, and the gate of Pluto lies open night and day.*

* *Nunc age Avena tibi, quæ sint locacunque lacusque.*—L. 6, 788.

† *Aen.* 6, 25.

The Greeks had a passage into *hades* at Taenaris, a promontory of Peloponnesus, now called capo maina. Of this Virgil also takes notice, when he tells us that Orpheus having entered the passage of Taenaris, and the lofty gates of Pluto, he visited the shades and their terrible king.*

We cannot refrain from viewing with a mixture of pity and ridicule, the foolish fancies of the ancients and moderns on the local position of hell. When our modern pietists of much devotion, little learning and much less sense, address the Maker, they look up, supposing him a venerable old man, commodiously seated in some lofty region in the Zenith, whilst they believe his Satanic majesty holds a commanding position in the Nadir, or regions directly beneath. Were these sages, who measure heaven and hell, and fix their stations in the vast empire of the Deity, to look into a book on astronomy, and there discover that the Zenith and Nadir changed places every twelve hours; so that the point directly above at noon, would be perpendicularly beneath at midnight, how would they be alarmed! Surely that man that looks up to find God, believes as much in a local and tutelar deity as the Israelites, when they adored the calves at Dan and Bethel!

Though Hades has sometimes the signification of Sheol, and simply intimates the idea of an unknown and unseen state or non-entity, yet it more generally denotes the abode of spirits indiscriminately. In the Septuagint it answers to sheol, and cannot therefore communicate any other idea than that of the Hebrew term.—Therefore by Hades, many have understood the grave; and in that sense it is sometimes used by the Greek writers.

Metros d' en hadou kai patros kekeuthotoin,

Ouk est adelphos hostis an blastoi pote.—Sophocles Antig. 924.

The reformers generally maintained in their controversies with the Catholics, that *hades* simply denoted the grave or state of the dead. Hence Corneil a Lapeire, in Ephs. 4, 10, asserts that Calvin and Beza both denied the descent of Christ to hell; believing *hades* to mean no more than the grave. Indeed our orthodox commentators on Acts 2, 27, are as strenuous advocates of the innocent meaning of the term, as any Universalist whatever: and the uniform testimony of competent judges, ancient and modern, affixes one meaning to the word *hades*, i. e. *the invisible world, or abode of spirits*. The Greeks assigned one Hades to all that die: hence they often say "*pantas homos thnetous haides dechetai. Hades receives all the dead.*" Caius, a Roman Presbyter, adopts similar language. "*En hadou sunechontai psuchai dikaion te kai adikon.*—*The souls of both the just and unjust go to hades.*" Job exclaims

* *Tenarias etiam fauces, alta ostia Ditis*

Ingressus, Manesque adiit regemque tremendum.—Geor. 4, 467.

sheol Bethni, hades is my house, 17, 13. Thou wilt bring me to the house appointed for all living."—30. 23. Both Homer and Euripides say of the dead in general, *katelthein eis dom hadou*—they go to the house of hades : and the learned Windgate says, *haiden nekron chorion exponunt Graeci*, the Greeks call the place of the dead, hades. Homer describing the rage of Achillis, says, it sent prematurely to hades, the souls of many brave heroes.

Pollas d' iphthimous psuchas Haidi proiapsen. Il. 1, 4.

Dr. S. Clark, in his sermon on Ps. 16, 10, says, "in the New Testament, the word hell sometimes denotes a place of punishment for the wicked, in other places, the state of the dead in general. But this ambiguity is only in the Translation and not in the original; for wherever a place of torment is mentioned, the word is always Gehennah in the original. But when only the state of the dead is intended, it is expressed in the original by Hades, a quite different word, which though translated hell, signifies only the invisible state. Accordingly the prediction, Mat. 11, 23, thou Capernaum shall be brought down to hell, means that great and proud city should be levelled with the dust, and utterly disappear as those who are buried in the grave. When the rich man in hell, lift up his eyes, being in torment, Luke 16, 23. The original only signifies that he was in the invisible world, wherein were Abraham and Lazarus; to which went Christ and the thief, and all that die, both righteous and wicked. When our Lord promises, Mat. 16, 18, that the gates of Hell should not prevail against his Church, the words *pulai hadou*, gates of hell, strictly rendered, signify the passage to the invisible world, i. e. death; and the import of the promise is, that death itself, the utmost extent of all persecution, should never be able to suppress his doctrine or extirpate his religion from this world. Lastly, prophesy intimates, that death and hell will deliver up the dead, and be then cast into the lake of fire. Hence it is very evident that hell cannot mean either the place or state of the damned, but on the contrary, the state of death, or death itself, including all human woe, which then shall be no more. So in Ps. 16, 10—Acts 2 27; thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, plainly implies a solid faith on the resurrection of the body. From this explanation of all the texts which relates to this subject, concludes the Dr. it is clear the scriptures no where teach, that our Lord, by descending into hell, ever entered a place appointed for the punishment of wicked men, nor is there any thing in reason, from which it can, by any just consequence, be inferred."

Hence we may fairly and reasonably conclude, from the unanimous testimony of the most learned and impartial Commentators both ancient and modern, that Hades does not signify a place appropriated to the punishment of the wicked.

GEHENNA:

According to the testimony of the scriptures, and the best historians, Gehenna was the name of a valley, south-east of mount Zion, which was the most southerly of those mountains, on which stood the once celebrated city of Jerusalem. The most remarkable declivity of mount Zion looks towards the south-west, being formed by a deep ravine, called in scripture *Ge-Ben-Hinnom*, or the valley of Hinnom. This valley running from west to east, met on the south-east, the valley of Jehoshaphat, or as it is some times called, the valley of Kedron, from the brook of that name by which it was watered. Here the horrid rites of human sacrifices were paid to Moloch and Beelphegor. The origin of the name is somewhat obscure. From Joshua 15, 8, we should incline to think it obtained the name from some family called Hinnom, to whom it once belonged. Some think it was so called from the facts noticed Is. 66, 24. The dead bodies of apostates and malefactors being exposed as a public example, might induce men to call the valley Hinnom, *there they are*, implying there lie or hang the bodies of those vile transgressors who forsook the God of their fathers, and followed the vanities of the nations. But others with more accuracy derive the word from the hebrew verb, *Hannam*, to yell, believing the valley to have obtained its name from the shrieks of the children sacrificed to Moloch.

St. Jerome, a native of Palestine, informs us that the valley of Hinnom, called Gehenna in the new testament, was a fine and beautiful place, adorned with gardens and well watered with fountains. The grandeur of the scenery first invited the idolatrous Amorites, and afterwards the Jews, to erect here the standard of superstition. Moloch signifies a *king* and was, very probably, a brazen image, designed to represent the sun, seeing fire was so much used in his worship. This opinion receives support from what is said by the prophet Amos 5, 26. Selden, who has given us a prolix account of this idol and the rites by which he was worshipped, adduces several testimonies to prove that the Phenicians and other nations, in the vicinity of Judea, actually sacrificed their children in times of calamity, to this blood-thirsty Demon. Hence the phrase "to pass through the fire," signifies to burn in sacrifice.—See Deut. 18, 10, 2 Kings 23, 10. Lev. 18, 21. 2 Chron. 28, 3. Jer. 7, 31, 19, 5, and 32. 35. Ps. 106, 37, and Ez. 16, 20, 21.

Bochart affirms that all the people of the east, worshipped the sun and consecrated to him, horses which they believed to be nimble as the sun. And as it was a prevailing notion that the sun was carried about in a chariot—chariots were dedicated to him, and horses slain in sacrifice by the Armenians, Persians, and others: and for the same reason the idolatrous kings of Judea, were drawn

out at the eastern gate of the city, which looked towards Tophet, to salute the sun on his appearance above the horizon. Accordingly we find that when they worshipped, they turned their faces towards the east—Ez. 8, 16. The sun, as an object of idolatrous worship, was adored under the names of Molech, Adrammelech, Baal, and Bethshemesh, 2 Kings 23, 5, 11. The following passage from Diodorus Siculus L. 20, will show to what an enormous extent the fanatical reverence for this fiery God had prevailed amongst the people of the east. “When Agathocles, tyrant of Sicily, besieged Carthage, the inhabitants imputing the calamity to the displeasure of Saturn, to whom they had lately sacrificed supposititious children; or such as they had privately purchased, whereas formerly they had burnt to his honor the best of their offspring: reflecting on these things, and seeing the enemy encamped at their very walls, they were seized with religious dread, for having profaned the honors of the Gods, and in haste to rectify their errors they chose two hundred of the noblest children and sacrificed them quickly. Many others, accused of irreligion, gave themselves up willingly, to the number of no less than three hundred! For they had a brazen statue, stretching out his hands towards the ground, in such a manner that the child placed in them, tumbled down into a pit full of fire.”

The following extract from D. Kimchi on 2 Kings 23, 10, will tend to explain the tabernacle of Moloch, mentioned Acts 7, 43, “our Rabbins of happy memory inform us that although all other houses of idolatry were in Jerusalem, Moloch was without it. His image was made hollow, and sat within seven chapels. Whosoever offered a flower, they opened to him the first of these; whosoever offered turtles or pigeons, they opened to him the second; to him that offered a lamb, they opened the third; to him that offered a ram, they opened the fourth; to him that offered a calf, they opened the fifth; to him that offered an ox, they opened the sixth; but whosoever offered his son, to him they opened the seventh.” Fabius also informs us that “the image of Moloch was made of brass, curiously contrived with seven cells, probably to represent the seven planets; and the offerings being put into these receptacles, they were shut, and all were burnt to ashes, whilst the people danced about the idol, and beat timbrels or tabrets to drown the cries of the tormented.” Who can fail to observe the striking similarity between those horrid monsters of antiquity, who burnt their children whilst they danced to the sound of the timbrel; and those modern advocates of a still more horrible Moloch, who tell us they shall sing in heaven, whilst their children shriek in the unquenchable fire of an endless Hell! Let not the reader be surprised, for all this is perfectly orthodox, and agreeable to the language of the holy fathers. “How shall I laugh, exclaims Tertul-

lian, how rejoice, how exult, when I behold so many monarchs groaning in the lowest abyss of darkness ; so many magistrates liquifying in fiercer fires than ever they kindled for christians ; so many sage philosophers blushing in red hot flames—!" But I must cast a veil over the rest of this infernal description ! Surely if a just God there be, who loves mercy, he would hurl the laughing miscreants from the battlements of heaven, into the Tartarian lake, there to exchange the laugh of mockery for the yells of despair !

TOPHET, like Gehenna, is somewhat of dubious signification. In certain passages of scripture it clearly implies the name of a place ; and from what is said of it Is. 30, 33, many have supposed it to mean hell, or the abode of the damned. Indeed Dr. Campbell thought that in the latter age of Jewish history, the word *Tophet*, was exclusively used to denote the hell of the moderns. Of this opinion I was also, during the early part of my ministry.—But how great was my surprise when I first read Jer. 19, 14. "*Then came Jeremiah from Tophet, whether the Lord had sent him to prophesy !*" What said I, Jeremiah in hell ! and sent there to prophesy ! But on further inquiry, I found Tophet to be the name of a place in the valley of Hinnom, near the city of Jerusalem, 2 Kings 23, 10, Jer. 7, 31. The children of Juda built Tophet in the valley of Hinnom, for the express purpose of burning their infants to Moloch or Baal, when all the good feelings of their nature had become extinct, by the baneful influence of superstition ; but the Jehovah of the Jews declares, the wicked thought never entered his heart to build a place for the burning of his offspring, see Jer. 7, 31, and 32, 35. Tophet was a great image erected to Moloch, hollow within, and prepared for the reception of those innocent victims, which were committed to the flames, as expiatory sacrifices to appease the wrath of this senseless god of *consuming fire* ! O ye worshippers of gods, whose very bowels emit columns of liquid flames, and whose breath is a stream of brimstone, think of horrid Moloch. Consider also, if the worshippers of the apocalyptic beast, be not tormented as the Jews were, by the slavish dread of a terrific monster !

Jewish writers in general are of opinion, that Tophet received its name from *Toph*, a drum, because that instrument was used to drown the cries of those infants, that were sacrificed to Moloch ; but Le Clerc objects to this etymology, because it does not appear that large drums were known to the ancients ; and the sound of the less, called *taber*, used in dances, was not sufficiently loud ; & for the large we are indebted to the Arabians, who first brought them into Spain. Though this objection does not seem very forcible, yet it is more reasonable to believe, that Tophet signifies a fire-stove, and that the large hollow image of Molech was so called ; and probably that

part of the valley of Hinnom, where the image stood, bore the same appellation. There is little pleasure in describing scenes of horror, but it may be useful to show us the evils of a false religion, and inspire us with grateful emotions for the enjoyment of the true. Be it known then, to the disgrace of the Jews, that although in possession of the knowledge of the one only true God, like modern Christians, they were too much inclined to the worship of idols; and having consecrated the solar fire as a deity, they erected Tophet as an altar to one of those agents, which God employs for the benefit of the world. An idol of brass, having the head of an ox, but the body of a man, was made to represent the fiery god; and the idol seated on a throne of brass, a crown was placed on its head, and its hands extended to receive their gifts. But what gifts were deemed most acceptable? Ah! had the fruits of the field or herds of the stall sufficed, it would have been well, but cruel Moloch cried for blood; and nothing less than the tender pledges of conjugal love, could glut the rapacity of this wrathful deity! The hollow idol was heated to redness—the parent by a refinement of cruelty, in order to acquire the summit of sanctity, must become the priest—himself must place his darling in its arms! No bewitching smiles or mournful cries must drive him from his purpose. His heart must be steeled against every tender impression, and a most complete conquest obtained over the strongest feelings of humanity. Fortunately the shocking scene was of short duration. The sacred drums, impiously so called, drowned the cries; and whilst the bodies of the innocent children became the victims of a merciless superstition, their souls reorganized, were received to the embraces of a kind and merciful God!

To prevent the continuance of this horrid practice, Josiah defiled this valley by making it a common depot for the filth of the city and the bodies of those criminals which were refused the rites of burial. 2 Kings, 23. 10. This valley was also made the place of execution for all who were condemned to be stoned or burnt to death by the supreme court at Jerusalem, called the Sanhedrim. According to the Jewish law there were nineteen offences, which subjected the criminal to suffer death by stoning; and ten, which were punished by burning to death, in the fire of Gehenna. Many of those who were stoned to death, were also hanged, and their bodies left to be meat to the fowls of heaven or the beasts of the field. Gen. 40. 19, 2 Sam. 21. 9. Jer. 7, 33, and 19, 7. Burning was performed either by roasting in the fire Jer. 29, 22, or in a furnace Dan. 3. 23. or by pouring melted lead down their throats. Lightfoot, from the Talmuds, informs us, that this last punishment was performed in the following manner. "The criminal being made fast a towel was put round his neck, and two men taking hold of the ends of the towel, one pulling one way, and the other the opposite, they forced him

by strangling to open his mouth ; then a third poured boiling-lead down his throat and burnt his bowels."

Some have thought from the peculiar use of the valley, Gehenna became proverbial to express any great punishment, or afflictive dispensation ; and might therefore be used by our Lord, to designate the torments of Hell in another word. In favor of this supposition, they refer to the Targum on Gen. 3, 24, and 15, 17. But in Targums were not composed till long after the Jews had mixed the captivity, with the Pagan nations and learned of them their fabulous ideas concerning the state of the Ghosts in Hades.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

The Devil Alive.

And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.—Rev. 12, 15.

Some had fondly thought from the loss sustained by his Satanic Majesty in our last number, he would have retreated from the field of action ; but that *useful* paper, "Zion's Herald," by an experiment, truly Methodistical, would teach us practically that *the devil is alive!* We are thankful to God, however, that he is only a ranting Methodist, and that almost the only devils we have now to resist, are *lying Methodist parsons!*

From the time I finally abandoned Methodism, that hot-bed of fanaticism and incivility, I have been pursued by a group of hornets, or religiously mad desperados, who being as void of decency as the savage of the forest or fishermen of Billingsgate, have serpent-like, poured out a flood of scandalous methodist libels, with the sordid view of destroying my usefulness as a public teacher. The dastardly banditti dare not confront me with truth or argument, but at a remote distance, they set up a most hideous growling. In a late number of the above named paper, (which ought to be called the "Herald of falsehood and obscenity,") a most flagitious attempt is made, by a contemptible wretch, calling himself John W. Hardy, to identify me and an Englishman called John Thomson. Having succeeded, in his own imagination, he pours forth a most foul and villanous libel, containing no less than *six base falsehoods*, in one short paragraph! Son of Belial wash thy heart from wickedness! Hear the words of Christ to pretending hypocrites like thee—*ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father, ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him—when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar and the father of it.*

Worthless libeller, and equally unprincipled Editor, ought ye not to have reflected on the evil your vile calumny might produce in two distant and different family connections! May not that John Thomson of whom ye speak, be a man of upright character; & how will it tear the bosoms of his already too anxious friends, to hear your malicious reports where they may have no means of detecting the wicked and scandalous falsehoods of *Zion's Herald*. Know then all ye distant friends and relations of John Thomson, *the Englishman*, and John Samuel Thompson, *the Irishman*, that what is said of the above names in *Zion's Herald* is *a most villanous and libellous Methodist story*, which its propagators are as unable to prove as they are to speak truth and act soberly!!

We could have scarcely believed that any man, making even a hypocritical pretence to religion, would have been so far lost to all sense of shame and decency as to begin so vicious a story, with no greater assurance than "I believe"—"I conclude"—"Probably"—"probably"—"probably"—But, he presumed it would go among the *Methodists*, and "*probably*" produce a revival, and "*probably*"—"probably" terminate in some conversions and a few proselytes! Suppose the whole story *true*; it would only show that I was a vile wretch, when I was a *Methodist preacher*; and this could be very easily accounted for, because Paul tells us, *that evil communications corrupt good manners!* "Probably" the Universalists are as well acquainted with my character as the sorry fellows known by the names of Hardy, Yates, and Brindle. The second of whom is a mean buckster in Liverpool, not worth five dollars, and the third a person of similar circumstances and business, in Philadelphia, both of whom have hitherto escaped the censure of the law, from a well known adage—sue a beggar, etc. notwithstanding they are called Rev. by my calumniator, for a very obvious reason.

The contents of the letter referred to in the libel were known to the Universalists before they received me, but they had just cause to believe the accusation a malevolent Methodist story, which always remained in *statu quo*, notwithstanding repeated challenges for proof of the charge. In the absence of all proper evidence to support the charge, and on the solemn disavowal of it by the accused, they granted that fellowship which they could not lawfully refuse, presuming that, *through envy*, the Methodists had acted on this occasion, as the Jews did formerly.

"I was expelled from the Methodists in 1820." Good God what a misfortune! to be expelled the society of immoral fanatics! But what was my crime? Come, reverend calumniators, stretch conscience if you have any—make out the lie.—Be as minute in the cause as in the date—you cannot tell a greater falsehood in the one case than you have in the other. Come vile Hardy show your cour-

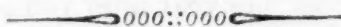
age answers to your name—falsify a little longer. Your libel says I came from Charleston, S. C. to Philadelphia, and was lately preaching in Worcester, Mass. Poor lying Methodists, know that instead of being expelled your worthless connexion in 1820, I presided at a love feast in Liverpool in March 1822, two years after you say I was expelled, and one year after you assert that I had sailed for America.—My printed plan which I showed to many persons in Philadelphia, contained appointments for me among the Methodists in England, till August 1822, nor am I otherwise separated from the Methodists of England, at present, than by absence and difference of opinion. Moreover I never was in S. Carolina, nor did I ever preach in Massachusetts. I am not an Englishman, nor was I ever known to the British people by any other name than that by which I am now distinguished in America. Here then Rev. Methodist Parsons, take your slanderous lies to your own bosoms and say, welcome legitimate offspring!

My Methodist libellers have uttered many hard things; who will hear them? Answer. All the true members of that *school of scandal* to which my calumniators belong; and all who are so fast bound in the shackles of priestcraft as to credit whatever is proclaimed by the motly mob of sacred impostors, who pretend to come loaded with the holy Ghost and the blood of souls!! These self-commissioned and professed soul-savers have been in all ages, the heralds of lies, falsehood, and slander, which have served as a LOVE-FEAST to glut the greedy appetites of a partial, sensorious, and ungodly world. That falsehood should be popular among the Methodists is no more than might be expected, when we consider that they are urged forward to it continually, by 10,000 drill sergeants, or class leaders, who train their recruits weekly, to bear the mask and pronounce the Shibboleth of the deluded party. From 12 years very extensive acquaintance with all the lurking places of the sect, I had become confirmed in the opinion, before ever I left it, that the Methodists monopolized nearly all that was base in Christianity! Let that sect hence know that I neither fear nor regard them, and that I desire nothing in common with one of them, till they are formed anew in the Resurrection.

J. S. THOMPSON.

P. S.—Let the Editor of Zion's Herald show that his "*distressing ease*" is not an American fabrication, got up for a villanous purpose. Let him obtain from London a description of the person and occupation of John Thomson. Let him show from all the annals of Methodism, that there ever was a person called John Samuel Thompson expelled from that connexion; or, if my calumniators will not accede to these terms, let them produce a man if they are able, worth even \$500, who will dare to patronize their libel. But prob-

ably sooner than they will comply with these conditions, my Bostonian, like my Rochestrian libellers will scamper for Canada, with the Sheriff at their heels!!

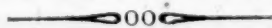


NEW CHURCH.

The corner stone of the Universalist Church in the village of Parma, was laid on May 27th, ult. with appropriate solemnities by the officers & brethren of Parma lodge, No. 540 of free and accepted Masons, assisted by the brethren of Wells Lodge, Rochester and others. Prayer by the Rev. Mr. Barns; Oration by the Rev. John S. Thompson; Eulogy on Masonry and Benediction, by the Rev. L. Knapp.

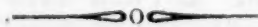
The house is 50 feet by 45; has an elegant steeple; stands in the very centre of the village, opposite the Parma Hotel; and will be inclosed in the present month. Our distant readers will be surprised to hear that this is the first house erected for worship, on the Great Ridge Road, between the Genesee and Niagara rivers, a distance of 75 miles.

The corner stone contains the following inscription. TO THE ONE ONLY GOD, SOLE PROPRIETOR OF THE UNIVERSE, this edifice is erected for his worship by the FIRST UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF PARMA, Monroe Co. N. Y. The society would hereby inform posterity that they are believers in the covenant which God made to Abraham, that in his seed, which is Christ, all the kindreds of the earth shall be blessed; and that in the execution of this covenant, Jesus, the Mediator, will restore all fallen intelligences to eternal purity and happiness; so that peace and bliss will universally pervade the vast empire of intellectual nature.



NEW PUBLICATION.

We have received the two first numbers of the "Christian Telescope," a weekly paper edited by Br. D. Pickering, Providence, R. I. The execution, appearance, matter and terms merit patronage.



GENESEE ASSOCIATION will meet at Pembroke, on Wednesday, the fifteenth inst. A considerable attendance of Ministers from the Western Association is expected.